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obtruded his patriotic sentiments upon his readers, and his opinions on controverted questions are carefully withheld; the attitude throughout is judicial. The statement of principles is also such as would be most generally accepted by economists.

A common error is repeated (p. 91) in saying that the silver coinage act of 1878 required the purchase of "sufficient silver at the market price to coin \$2,000,000 a month," instead of, as stated in the law, "not less than two million dollars' worth per month."

The author has performed his task well as he understood it. But he has misunderstood his task through overestimating the ability of young students to grasp a system of general principles. He aimed to give "condensation rather than elementary departures, for it is the simplicity and not the complexity of economic principles that makes them so elusive" (p. vii). But it is the abstractness of economic principles, as of all other principles, that renders them so elusive, *e.g.*, in such expressions as "the saved results of past labor" (p. 103), and "banks with power to issue notes lend their credit" (p. 118). Illustrations — and the author has given plenty of them — may make a principle understood; but a body of principles can be held together only by conceiving of each one in the abstract and connecting them deductively. The story of John Doe's boots soon breaks down with its load of principles. This abstract and deductive thinking is impossible for most children and many adults, and therefore puts such a body of economic theory as Mr. Wood has prepared beyond their reach. His book would seem best suited for pupils in the second or third year of a high school, and might be just what is wanted where it is desired to study political economy ten or twelve weeks from a text.

F. R. CLOW.

OSHKOSH, WIS.

Economics as a Foundation for a Theory of Government. By WILLIAM M. COLEMAN. New York: Evening Post Job Printing Office, 1901. 8vo, pp. ii + 88.

THIS is essentially a discussion of the theory of distribution, ending in the conclusion that government should promote the increase of the total product and "keep the channels of distribution free so that such increase may be promptly diffused throughout society." The author ranges somewhat widely through economic literature, but devotes more

attention to Clark than to anyone else ; his treatment of distribution is in the main that of Clark, except for his dismissal of the "marginal device" as a useless and confusing elaboration. To the general reader the work would be utterly unreadable because of the heavy style and confused thought ; while the specialist, for whom it was doubtless written, will find little that is new.

F. R. CLOW.

Kulturgeschichte der Neuzeit. By KURT BREYSIG. Band II: Erste Hälfte, *Urzeit—Griechen—Römer*; Zweite Hälfte, *Entstehung des Christenthums—Jugend der Germanen*. Berlin: Georg Bondi, 1901. 8vo, pp. xxii + 518 and xxxix + 521—1442.

THE continuation of Professor Breysig's *History of Culture in Modern Times* has in every respect kept up to what the introductory volume promised. The treatment of the subject is broad and comprehensive, the opinions expressed are characterized by thorough knowledge of the literature, and above all the book shows understanding and sympathy for the latest, most progressive views without always subscribing to their dictum. The volumes are in every sense modern in tone, and though critical in attitude are not overwhelmed with detail. True to the idea expressed in the first volume, (reviewed in June number of this JOURNAL, 1901), the author never discusses the economic side of civilization except in connection with its social and political features. This attitude, at least as far as the ancient period is concerned, may be justifiable because of the meagerness of the sources and the prevailing interest in political events, but it leaves a gap somewhat painfully felt in the otherwise rather exhaustive treatment. However scant our information, economic problems must have faced the Greeks as they faced all other nations. Notwithstanding the frugality of the race and the advantageous nearness of a large continent, the food question, no less than a large international competition for trade, must have been a serious matter and brought about colonization and the search for new unexplored territories. How the aristocracy with its country estates and retinue of dependents passed over into a city population with a growing industry, a large percentage of strangers and of slaves, which made certain cities metropolises of commerce with shipping companies, factories, money-lenders, yet all the while the